



Casa Grande Dispatch Maricopa Monitor Coolidge Examiner Eloy Enterprise Florence Reminder & Blade-Tribune Arizona City Independent/Edition
San Tan Valley Sentinel Tri-Valley Dispatch

http://www.pinalcentral.com/opinion/letters_to_editor/it-s-time-to-pay-attention/article_eea9c13b-04e0-5e23-acbe-bf77a9d1c056.html

It's time to pay attention

10 hrs ago

Editor, Casa Grande Dispatch:

Does it seem that it's becoming ever more difficult to keep up with everything political these days? Maybe it's because of the constant bombardment of hyperbole, spin and "alternative fact" proliferation.

I feel the need to point out some clear and indisputable truths about politics in Arizona.

The GOP has controlled every single statewide office and both chambers of the Legislature since 2009.

Arizona has the lowest-paid K-12 teachers in the nation and has a shortage of nearly 2,000 teachers — hundreds have left this school year alone.

Even with the 2018 projected state budget, the state will invest \$952 million less in public education this year than it did in 2008 — while increasing funding to private and religious schools.

Arizona has the nation's third highest sales tax rate — higher than California, Illinois, New York and Massachusetts! Arizona is tied for the nation's lowest corporate income tax — with an ideological promise to go lower every year!

Arizona gives away more in corporate sales tax loopholes each year (\$13.7B) than the entire state budget (\$9.5B). The GOP has blocked any audits to find out if we're getting a meaningful return on investment.

The governor has convened a closed-door panel to find ways to weaken the state's water conservation laws that date back over 30 years. This, with the prediction of increased drought looming.

These are troubling trends for our state. Regardless of your party affiliation, you should be alarmed. I believe the time has come to challenge the direction of Arizona politics. Our current governor and state Legislature are running a bargain basement business at our expense. I believe it's time to invest in Arizona, rather than in lobbyists, high-end donors and deep money special interests. I urge you to pay attention and vote based on the truth and the best interests of Arizona!

Ralph Atchue

Eloy

The writer is a Democratic candidate for state Senate in Legislative District 11.